

A century ago, many scoffed at the notion of having a team of professionals help the Senate write legislation. It was actually a New Yorker, I am proud to say, Elihu Root, who originally suggested in 1912 that, maybe, this body could use a little help in constructing well-written laws. It took a few years after he made his plea, but the complexity of tax legislation to raise revenue during World War I led to the creation of the original drafting service.

During its first 4 years, the Legislative Drafting Service handled 518 requests. By the 114th Congress, however, they were receiving more than 65,000. It is an amazing workload, unglamorous but vital and essential.

Over the past few weeks, as we have worked on the bipartisan infrastructure bill, the members of the legislative counsel have sacrificed weekends, family gatherings, and many, many hours of sleep to allow the Senate to do its work. I have seen it. We have called them up at 11 p.m. and said: You are needed to get this ready by the morning. And they don't flinch. They just roll up their sleeves and work in their professional way.

So we have always asked a lot of the legislative counsel, but they stepped up and did their job with excellence. There are a lot of members of the team who deserve recognition, beginning with the team's laudable and impressive leader on this bill, Deanna Edwards.

I also want to thank Diane Nesmeyer and her team of assistants, who have all contributed very long hours, and let me mention them. They each deserve their own acknowledgement: Heather Burnham, Mark Mazzone, Christina Kennelly, Chris Patterson, Patrick Ryan, Karson Katz, Heather Lowell, Matt McGhie, John Goetteus, Ruth Ernst, Mark McGunagle, Allison Otto, Vince Gaiani, Phil Lynch, John Henderson, James Ollen-Smith, Kim Albrecht-Taylor, Christine Miranda, Rob Silver, Evan Frank, and Molly Dunlop.

To every single person I mentioned, thank you, thank you, thank you for your incredible and indispensable work. Your skill and dedication makes it possible for this Chamber to serve the American public.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the random violence on the streets of Chicago results in Monday morning reports that break your heart: 100 people shot

on the Fourth of July weekend; the following weekend, 50; the weekend after that, 70.

It never stops. These mass shootings have become part of life in many cities across America, and it is a heart-breaking reality.

There are many ways to look at it. I have tried my best to understand it and to respond from a legislative point of view, but as we kind of play the possibilities and debate the opportunities we have to change things, the killing just goes on and on.

The city of Chicago, like many cities in the United States, is awash in guns—awash in guns. Police—I believe the statistic is—have confiscated 16,000 so far this year and still counting; thousands and thousands and thousands of guns.

In the roughest parts of Chicago, you wave a couple of \$20 bills and you have a handgun in a matter of minutes. And there really is no age check involved; and young kids, as much as older folks, buy these guns right and left, claiming they are for self-defense and many times just putting them into the machinery of crime and death that has become such a predictable part of life in that great city.

Chicagoans across every possible demographic this morning are shocked and grieving to learn that another Chicago police officer was killed in the early morning hours.

The slain officer was just 29 years old—29. She was assigned to the Community Safety Team, a special unit of officers from various districts who are pooled and sent to the meanest, most dangerous “hot spots” in the city. Her name has not been released.

She and another Chicago police officer were shot last night when they pulled over a car in the Englewood neighborhood on Chicago South Side. The second officer is hospitalized as well and fighting for his life.

Two suspects have been arrested, and a third is being sought.

Gun violence and gun deaths are daily threats in many neighborhoods, neighborhoods where it is easier to find a gun than to find a job. Sadly, it is increasingly a mortal threat to the Chicago police officers who work in these neighborhoods.

Several months ago, I had an impromptu, unreported meeting with the Chicago police force and invited anyone in who wanted to sit with a Senator and try to explain what is going on. Eight of them showed up and were pretty well representative of the Chicago police department—Black, White, Brown; male, female; Hispanic, African American; young and old—and they talked about the world they lived in and how the odds were against them on the streets of Chicago.

The bad guys just have too damn many guns, and that is a reality. They don't buy those guns in the city of Chicago, incidentally. They buy them outside of Chicago—northwest Indiana, at gun shows, with no background checks.

The gangbangers just take a 15-, 20-minute trip over the Indiana-Illinois border to a gun show and load up their truck with more guns, bring them back in, and sell them on the streets of Chicago. That is a reality.

Guns come from unlikely places. Too many guns come from States like Louisiana and Mississippi, where they have gun standards that are weaker than some other places. But they also come from downstate Illinois. I am not going to try to sugarcoat that. Those are the reports.

It troubles me, too, because when I talk to the police, they say: We need Federal help.

What they would like to be able to do is try to track these guns, try to determine their sources and cut them off. The Agency that does it is the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Agency.

We are trying now—desperately trying now to get the approval in the Senate for a person to head that Agency, and, no surprise, the ranks are closed against this person on the other side of the aisle.

Those who are listening closely to the gun lobby are trying their best to make sure ATF, this Federal Agency, doesn't have strong leadership, doesn't exercise all its authority under the law to make us safer. That doesn't make it any easier for the Chicago police, and they end up paying the price.

The latest fallen hero is the first Chicago police officer killed by gunfire in more than 2½ years. But nearly 40 Chicago police officers have been shot, or shot at, in the line of duty this year. That is part of the duty, the responsibility they face as they prowl the streets and alleys of the great city.

Chicagoans mourn for the police officer who lost her life. We are going to pray desperately for recovery of the wounded officer. Thoughts and prayers are not enough to end gun violence in Chicago and nearly every community in America. We all know that. We need better laws to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and also out of the hands of people with serious mental illness and others who shouldn't have them either.

America's families and police officers deserve our best effort to make the streets safer in Chicago and many other American cities.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I have been listening to criticism from the other side of the aisle about our plan to improve American families' economic security and the long-term strength in our economy.

And I have to wonder, why do Republicans never worry about deficits when they are passing trillion-dollar tax cuts that shower nearly all of the benefits on millionaires and wealthy corporations?

Why do Republicans only rediscover a concern about the debt when they are asked to support policies to help middle-class, working families, low-income